

NATIONAL

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing pays homage to presiding monk of Zay Kone Buddhist Monastery

PAGE-3

LOCAL NEWS

All YBS buses running in Yangon

PAGE-10

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VII, No. 293, 7th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME

www.gnlm.com.mm, www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Wednesday, 3 February 2021

Senior General makes speech at Union Government meeting

COMMANDER-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivered a keynote speech at the meeting of Union Government at the President House in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The meeting was attended by Acting President U Myint Swe, Union Ministers General Mya Tun Oo, Lt-Gen Soe Htut, U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Win Shein, U Ko Ko Hlaing, U Chit Naing, U Ko Ko, U Myint Kyaing and Dr Thet Khaing Win.

In his opening remark, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing urged the Union Ministers to make collective efforts in working for the country by taking responsibilities of the respective ministries as they were believed to have sufficient qualifications to serve for the ministerial role, while the Tatmadaw has taken the administrative and management role of a government.

He also instructed to take the lessons from two previous democratic governments' experiences and strengthen their advantages as the public and international communities have made their responses to these governments.



Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing chairs the Union Government meeting at the President House in Nay Pyi Taw on 2 February 2021. PHOTO: OFFICE OF COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES

The Senior General also stressed the independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy and the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence in moving along the democratic path suitable for the country on its own stance.

The Senior General continued to say to focus on the duties by avoiding any mistakes as the Tatmadaw is the interim administrative organization.

He also recommended the implementation of democracy that meets the existing situa-

tions of the country.

Regarding the elections, he said that errors in voter lists would be identified after reconstituting the Union Election Commission. Statements of the Tatmadaw on findings in the scrutiny of voter lists are ac-

curate. However, the previous UEC did not take actions on the Tatmadaw's statements on this issue. The findings from 314 townships had only some errors due to computer system faults.

SEE PAGE-2

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Announcement of Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

6th Waning of Pyatho, 1382 ME
(2 February 2021)

1. Myanmar nationals have been brought back as they wanted to return home from abroad via relief flights during the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.
2. During the COVID-19 pandemic, as for Myanmar nationals abroad, it is better to return to Myanmar than they are experiencing difficulties abroad.
3. We would like to announce that in accordance with the rules set by relevant ministries, we will timely arrange more relief flights/vessels to bring back Myanmar nationals who are legally or illegally staying abroad.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Information
Announcement
6th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
2 February 2021

1. The Office of the President released Order No (1/2021) on 1 February 2021 declaring the State of Emergency and the emergency declaration shall remain in force for one year; effective from 1 February 2021 according to Article 417 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

2. The Order also stated that electoral fraud in multiparty general election conducted on 8 November 2020 caused the loss of the unity of the ethnic nationalities and the stability of the country. As it failed to address the cases, the Tatmadaw conducted in accordance with the law as it might cause obstacles in the pathway to democracy.

3. However, some of the media organizations and people are posting rumours on social media, releasing statements to occur riot and unstable situation. Therefore, it is here announced that not to make such moves, and to cooperate with the government in accordance with the existing laws.

Senior General makes speech at Union Government meeting

FROM PAGE-1

The Senior General said that the independent and no-bias personnel would examine the voting data to find correct results, and actions would be taken accordingly in the process. The voter lists should be scrutinized in line with family household registrations in the 2014 census and 2019 preliminary census taken by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population. He instructed to issue national scrutiny cards for the people in ethnic areas.

Concerning the COVID-19 containment measures, the Senior General said that the control and treatment measures would be continued. The orders on COVID-19 measures will remain effective until they are not changed. The vaccination programme will be carried out in line with the rules, and flights will be arranged for the imported vaccine.

He also discussed the repatriation programme for the stranded nationals in foreign countries, disease control measures, the collaboration of relevant ministries with the Ministry of Health and Sports, and the reopening of pagodas and other religious buildings under the COVID-19 rules.

The Senior General held talks on the recovery of economic sector in the country, which was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of agricultural industry that is relied by 70 per cent of the country's population who are living in rural areas, the regular needs of food for over 7 billion global population, creation of employment opportunities for them from food production sector, economic recovery plan, jobs for the unemployed people, the role of Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation in this sector, resumption of closed factories in accordance with the rule, distribution of protective items for the disease at lowest prices, if necessary, with the government subsidy from the COVID-19 prevention fund, reopening of domestic travels and hotels, enforcement of COVID-19 containment rules, the awareness programme of the Ministry of Information in this measure, following national characteristics in entertainment programmes, and implementing COVID-19 recovery plan from various sectors.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing advised adhering to rules and regulations to scrutinize the voter list fraud, which was a cause for the unavoidable option to the existing situation.

Before the next government takes office after another election, the Tatmadaw needs to manage the country for the country's stability and prioritize the election issue, COVID-19 measures, and financial sector.

The Senior General also detailed the international relations, census-taking issues for holding the elections again, preparations for reopening pagodas, repatriation of Myanmar nationals from abroad and reopening of hotels.

Then, the Union Ministers reported on their plans for respective ministries. The meeting concluded after the Senior General made the closing remarks, according to the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Kawthoung Fisheries Department raise blood clams in mangrove

THE Department of Fisheries of Kawthoung District raised the blood clams (Tegillarca granosa) into the mangroves of Pu Lone

Staff of the Department of Fisheries raise the blood clams into the mangroves of Pu Lone Tone Tone Village in Kawthoung. PHOTO: KYAW SOE (KAWTHOUNG)

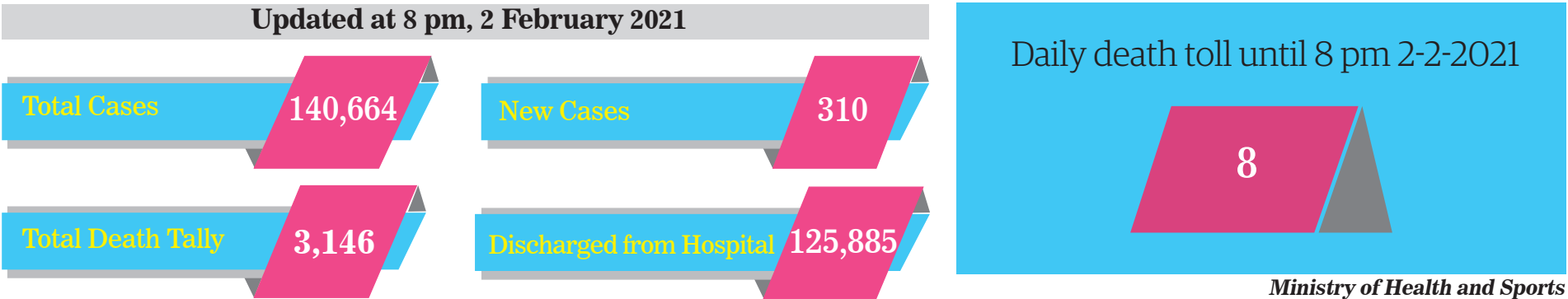
Tone Tone Village as a move to conserve the marine products yesterday.

The department fixes the close season, no-fishing season, no-collecting hard clam and sanctuary for crab and lobster to conserve the marine resources in townships of Taninthayi Region, Ayeyawady Region, Mon State and Rakhine State and now adds about 10 kilos of blood clams.

The small-scale marine businesses officially export the marine products such as blood clams, crabs and frozen cuttle-fish via Kawthoung to Thailand in accordance with the procedures of the department during COVID-19 pandemic.—Kyaw Soe (Kawthoung) *(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)*

310 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 2 February, total figure rises to 140,664

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 140,664 after 310 new cases were reported on 2 February 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these 140,664 confirmed cases, 3,146 died, 125,885 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA



Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
Order No (9/2021)
6th Waning of Pyatho, 1382 ME
2 February 2021

The State Administration Council is formed with the following personnel in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar:

(a) Senior General Min Aung Hlaing	Chairman	(i) U Khin Maung Swe	Member
(b) Vice-Senior General Soe Win	Vice-Chairman	(j) Lt-Gen Aung Lin Dway	Secretary
(c) General Mya Tun Oo	Member	(k) Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo	Joint-Secretary
(d) Admiral Tin Aung San	Member		
(e) General Maung Maung Kyaw	Member		Sd/
(f) Lt-Gen Moe Myint Tun	Member		Min Aung Hlaing
(g) Phado Mahn Nyein Maung	Member		Senior General
(h) U Thein Nyunt	Member		Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing pays homage to presiding monk of Zay Kone Buddhist Monastery

COMMANDER-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, accompanied by Union Minister for Defence General Mya Tun Oo and Nay Pyi Taw Command Commander Major-General Zaw Myo Tin, yesterday evening, visited the Zay Kone Buddhist Monastery, Pyinmana, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, and paid homage to the Padana Nayaka Sayadaw (Abbot) Abhidhaja Maharatha Guru Bhaddanta Kavisara.

The Commander-in-Chief paid homage to the Sayadaw and donated a saffron robe and other offertories.

During the visit, the Commander-in-Chief asked about Sayadaw's health condition and religious matters.

The Commander-in-Chief also explained the situations in which Tatmadaw is taking responsibility for the State because of the recent election situations in Myanmar.

The Commander-in-Chief also explained the conditions for the restoration of normal social harmony and cultural traditions in Myanmar.

The Commander-in-Chief also listened to instructions from the Sayadaw, according to the report of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.—MNA

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)



Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, accompanied by Union Minister for Defence General Mya Tun Oo and Nay Pyi Taw Command Commander Major-General Zaw Myo Tin, visits the Zay Kone Buddhist Monastery, Pyinmana and presents offertories to the presiding monk. **PHOTO: MNA**

COVID-19 Call Centre opens daily

In efforts to speed up the prevention, containment and treatment of the COVID-19 disease, the call centre ([phone number 2019](#)) is established by four communications operators and the Blue Ocean Company with the coordination of the Medical Research Department of the Health and Sports Ministry and Post and Telecommunications Department from 9 am to 5 pm daily at the Medical Research Department in Yangon.

Over 43 staff from the Medical Research Department and 17 volunteers from the Myanmar Medical Association totally 60 workers have been working at the centre since 8th April.—MNA

Weekly relief flight from RoK to Yangon to be resumed

MYANMAR Embassy in Seoul announced the resumption of weekly relief flights for Myanmar nationals during the COVID-19 crisis from the Republic of Korea to Yangon starting from 5 February.

Due to the temporary closure of the Yangon International Airport, the

relief flight from Seoul to Yangon was suspended on 2 February and the replacement relief flight will be flown on 6 February for the passengers registered to board the relief flight scheduled for 2 February.—MNA

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
Announcement to public

6th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
2 February 2021

1. The Myanmar Tatmadaw has firmly adhered to the motto of ‘People are the parents’ in dealing with the public in successive times. The ‘multiparty democracy system’ expected by the people was also peacefully adopted through political cultures of negotiation and legal procedures.

2. The 2010 Multiparty General Election, the 2015 Multiparty General Election, the 2012 By-election and the 2017 By-election were organized successfully. There were no significant controversies over the elections, except for some common arguments which were settled by the UEC and members at that time.

3. In exercising the multiparty democracy system, an independent and fair election is the lifeblood. The only free and fair election could reflect genuine people’s desire. Article 4 of the 2008 State Constitution has mentioned that ‘The sovereign power of the Union is derived from the citizens and is in force in the entire country.’ The government, the Hluttaws and organizations at Union and region/state levels which will exercise the state power are elected by the public directly or indirectly. Only when such elections are independent, clean and fair, will it reflect the genuine public desire, and would it be truly derived from the people/nationals.

4. There were 10,482,116 (over 10.4 million) errors which can be assumed as the voting fraud on the findings from the scrutiny on official voter lists officially issued by the Union Election Commission in the 2020 multiparty general election. The official announcement of UEC said there were 38 million eligible voters, and that over 10 million voting frauds have accounted for 25 per cent of eligible voters. People can understand that the case was not an ordinary mistake and a regular controversy. To realize this problem, the Tatmadaw has issued the statements on the findings for 30 times, 2 announcements before the elections and 4 announcements after the elections, totally 6 times. The concrete documents were transparently displayed in front of over 50 local and international media organizations during the press conference of the Tatmadaw.

5. The Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services has repeatedly reminded even before the election to ensure an independent and fair election, as well as sincere politics as it is a foundation for the multiparty democracy system. ‘whether an independent and fair election or not’ cannot be decided only on the election day. All at least three periods—campaign period before the election, during the election, and the post-election— must be scrutinized on its fairness, no doubt, and reliability. However, there were controversies over freedom, fairness and reliability in all three periods. Therefore, a total of 20 political parties issued 26 letters of
- announcement over possible voting fraud and called for the delay of the third Hluttaw session until the complaints have been solved. A total of the 124 protests took place in 99 townships from 10-11-2020 to 29-1-2021, objecting to the works of UEC.

6. The Tatmadaw, in accordance with the 2008 Constitution and other existing laws, did the following without violating provisions of the laws to ensure “free and fair elections”:

(a) On 2-11-2020, Tatmadaw issued a statement to inform the Union Government and the Union Election Commission about situations in the run-up to the multiparty democracy general election; the Union Election Commission’s various directives that violated existing laws; and fraudulent issues encountered during advance voting.

(b) On 2-11-2020, a statement was issued calling on all ethnic armed organizations not to threaten local ethnic people and political parties in order that political parties could conduct election campaigns and to ensure free and fair elections.

(c) On 30-11-2020, a statement was issued requesting to let copies of documents in accordance with Article 74 and 76 of the Evidence Act to resolve electoral disputes and to ensure that the public recognizes the general election as free and fair.

(d) The Union Election Commission did not allow the copying of documents, so on 10-12-2020, a statement was issued requesting the copying of such documents as citizen’s right to vote and the right to object in accordance with the laws.

(e) On 11-1-2021, a total of 203 Hluttaw representatives from Tatmadaw and political parties called for the convening of a Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Special Session in accordance with the Constitution, and the request was denied. So, on 14-1-2021, we issued a statement to review whether the denial is in accordance with the Constitution.

(f) The reason why the Tatmadaw announced its findings of the general election and election fraud lists were that Tatmadaw wanted to unequivocally recognize the results of free, fair, and transparent general election. If the Union Election Commission could resolve the issue and could show that it was a free, fair, and transparent election reflecting the real will of the general public, then Tatmadaw and political parties would accept the results in accordance with the real will of the voters. So, on 20-1-2021, Tatmadaw issued a statement requesting that the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw or the Union Government, or the Union Election Com-

mission find a solution to resolve the issue for the benefit of the State and the citizens.

7. In addition to the above-mentioned statements, the Tatmadaw issued a statement calling on the government to convene a meeting of the National Defence and Security Council to address the issue. The Tatmadaw also issued statements urging the Union Election Commission, which was directly involved in the election, to resolve the issue in accordance with the laws and procedures. When the Union Election Commission refused to resolve the issue, the Tatmadaw requested the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw to resolve it. Although the request was in line with the laws, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw refused to convene the special session of the Hluttaw. Then, Tatmadaw requested that the government or Pyidaungsu Hluttaw or the Union Election Commission needed to find a solution to resolve the issue. When all these steps were rejected, we proposed twice to convene a meeting of the President-led “National Defence and Security Council”, which represents both the civilian and the military. Tatmadaw followed the procedures and the laws step-by-step.

8. The Tatmadaw follows Article 4 of the Constitution, which says “the Sovereign power of the Union is derived from the citizens and is in force in the entire country”; Article 6 (d) and 7 of the Constitution, which says “flourishing of a genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system”, and Article 6 (f) of the Constitution, “enabling the Defence Services to be able to participate in the National political leadership role of the State”. The relevant officials failed to resolve the issues related to 10,482,116 (more than ten million four hundred thousands) possible fraudulent ballots in the 2020 general election, but they convened the Hluttaw and tried to form a government. These actions are “acts to take over the sovereignty of the Union by wrongful forcible means” as mentioned in the Section 40 (c) and 417 of the Constitution.

9. Therefore, by following the provisions (of the Constitution) mentioned in paragraph 8 of this announcement, the Tatmadaw has been taking all duties and responsibilities of the State since 1 February. The Tatmadaw will do necessary tasks in accordance with the laws. A genuine and disciplined multiparty democratic system will be established with full justice, and free and fair general elections will be held as soon as the tasks are completed in accordance with the emergency provisions, and the power will be transferred to the winning political party. We would like to call on all the citizens to work together with the Tatmadaw to build a genuine and disciplined multiparty democratic system with full justice.

Office of the Commander-in-Chief of
Defence Services

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (1/2021)
6th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
2 February 2021

Appointment and Assignment of Union
Attorney-General

Dr Daw Thida Oo is appointed by the State Administration Council as the Union Attorney-General in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

By order
Sd/ Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (2/2021)
6th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
2 February 2021

Appointment and Assignment of Union
Auditor-General

Dr Kan Zaw is appointed by the State Administration Council as the Union Auditor-General in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

By order
Sd/ Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (3/2021)
6th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
2 February 2021

Duty Termination from Deputy
Attorney-General

Deputy Attorney-General U Win Myint is terminated from his duties.

By order
Sd/ Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (4/2021)
6th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
2 February 2021

Duty Retirement from Chief of Myanmar
Police Force

Police Lieutenant-General Aung Win Oo, Chief of Myanmar Police Force is allowed to retire from his duties.

By order
Sd/ Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (5/2021)
6th Waning of Pyatho, 1382 ME
2 February 2021

Transfer and Assignment of
Deputy Minister

Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Major-General Soe Tint Naing is transferred by the State Administration Council as the Deputy Minister for Union Government Office in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

By order
Sd/ Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (6/2021)
6th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
2 February 2021

Appointment and Duty Assignment of
Deputy Minister

Lieutenant-General Than Hlaing is appointed by the State Administration Council as the Deputy Minister for Home Affairs and concurrently as the Chief of Myanmar Police Force in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

By order
Sd/ Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

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Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (7/2021)
6th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
2 February 2021

Appointment and Assignment of
Chairman of UEC and members

The following persons are appointed by the State Administration Council as the Chairman and members of the Union Election Commission in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

1.	U Thein Soe	Chairman
2.	U Thaung Tin	Member
3.	U Than Tun	Member
4.	U Kyauk	Member
5.	U Aung Saw Win	Member
6.	U Than Win	Member

By order
Sd/ Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (9/2021)
6th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
2 February 2021

Appointment and Assignment of Union
Ministers

The following persons are assigned by the State Administration Council to the duties of Union Ministers shown against each of their respective ministries in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

1.	U Khin Maung Yi	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation
2.	U Shwe Lay	Ministry of Construction

By order
Sd/ Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (11/2021)
6th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
2 February 2021

Appointment and Assignment of Chairmen of
Self-Administered Division and Zones

The following persons are assigned by the State Administration Council to the duties of the Chairmen of the Administration Councils shown against each of their respective Self-Administered Division and Zones in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

1.	U Tun Tun Win	Naga Self-Administered Zone
2.	U Arkar Lin	Danu Self-Administered Zone
3.	U Khun Ye Htwe	Pa-O Self-Administered Zone
4.	Tar Thein Zaw	Palaung Self-Administered Zone
5.	U Myint Swe	Kokant Self-Administered Zone
6.	U Nyi Nat	Wa Self-Administered Division

By order
Sd/ Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (8/2021)
6th Waning of Pyatho, 1382 ME
2 February 2021

Appointment and Assignment of
Governor of the Central Bank

U Than Nyein is appointed by the State Administration Council as the Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

By order
Sd/ Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Councils
Order No (10/2021)
6th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
2 February 2021

Appointment and Assignment of Chairmen of
State/Region Administration Councils

The following persons are assigned by the State Administration Council to the duties of the Chairmen of the Administration Councils shown against each of their respective States/Regions in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

1.	U Khet Htein Nan	Kachin State
2.	U Khin Maung Oo (a) Buyai	Kayah State
3.	U Saw Myint Oo	Kayin State
4.	U Tarance Smoine Ne Khwe	Chin State
5.	Dr Tin Htay	Mon State
6.	Dr Aung Kyaw Min	Rakhine State
7.	Dr Kyaw Tun	Shan State
8.	U Maung Maung Lin	Sagaing Region
9.	U Tint Lwin	Magway Region
10.	U Maung Ko	Mandalay Region
11.	U Myo Swe Win	Bago Region
12.	U Tin Aung	Taninthayi Region

By order
Sd/ Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (12/2021)
6th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
2 February 2021

Appointment and Assignment of
Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council

Dr Maung Maung Naing is appointed by the State Administration Council as the Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

By order
Sd/ Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Domestic gold price jumps to K1,341,000 per tical

By Nyein Nyein

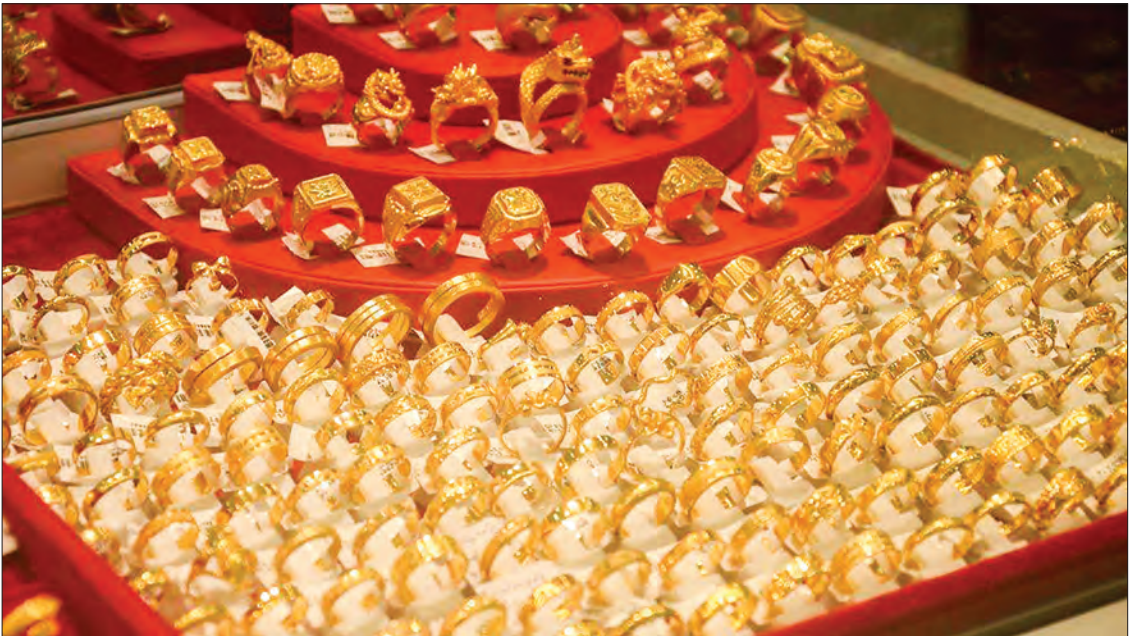
THE domestic gold price soared to K1,341,000 per tical (0.578 ounces, or 0.016 kilogrammes) on 2 February, the gold traders said.

The international gold price was pegged at around US\$1,855 per ounce on 2 February 2021, while a US dollar exchange rate was worth K1,335.

Last 6 January 2021, the precious pure gold metal price rose to K1,336,000 per tical in the domestic market, and now, it peaked within one month.

However, the local market sees more sellers outnumbering the buyers.

Earlier, the daily transaction of 50 visses (a viss equals 1.6 kg) of gold were seen in the market. Now, about five visses are traded per day, according to



Gold jewellery is seen at one of the gold shops . PHOTO : PHOE KHWAR

the Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association.

In January 2021, the gold price was ranged between the

minimum of K1,316,000 per tical (28 January) and the maximum of K1,336,000 per tical (6 January).

According to gold traders, the local gold reached the lowest level of K1,310,500 (2 September) and the highest level

of K1,314,000 (1 September). In October, the rate ranged between K1,307,800 (30 October) and K1,316,500 (21 October). The rate fluctuated between the highest of K1,317,000 (9 November) and the lowest of K1,270,000 (30 November). In December, the pure yellow metal price moved in the range of 1,280,000 (1 December) and 1,332,000 (28 December).

With global gold prices on the uptick, the domestic price hit fresh highs last year, reaching K1,000,000 per tical between 17 January and 21 February, crossing K1,100,000 (22 June to 5 August), climbing to over 1,200,000 (7 August-4 September), and then reaching an all-time record high of K1,300,000 on 5 September 2019.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Myanmar ships over 720,000 tonnes of rice over past 3 months



Workers carrying sacks of rice at the Botahtaung Jetty in Yangon. PHOTO : PHOE KHWAR

By Nyein Nyein

MYANMAR exported over 720,000 tonnes of rice and broken rice to foreign countries between 1 October and 15 January of the current financial year 2020-2021, Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) stated.

The country sent over 308,000 tonnes to neighbouring countries via border trade and maritime trade saw over 418,000 tonnes. It earned over US\$275 million from rice exports.

Myanmar has exported

rice to 31 foreign markets so far. China is the main buyer of Myanmar rice with over 340,000 tonnes, followed by the Philippines (36,000 tonnes) and Poland (14,000 tonnes). Meanwhile, Myanmar sent broken rice mostly to China (around 210,000 tonnes), followed by Belgium (46,000 tonnes) and Thailand (over 6,300 tonnes). Broken rice was placed in 16 foreign markets.

Myanmar set the rice export target at only 2 million tonnes in the current FY as summer paddy growing acreage drops, said

Chairperson U Ye Min Aung of the Myanmar Rice Federation.

Weather changes affected irrigation water resource availability on agriculture. Consequently, the export figures showed a drop of 300,000 tonnes of rice in exports this year.

Myanmar generated over \$800 million from rice exports in the previous FY2019-2020 ended 30 September, with an estimated volume of over 2.5 million tonnes.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

MoC extends import permit on reconditioned machine for SMEs

THE Ministry of Commerce has extended import permits on the reconditioned machine for the small and medium-sized enterprises, support the establishment of the manufacturing process and reduce the capital expenditure, according to the notification released in the third week of January 2021.

The Ministry of Commerce has allowed the import of used machines which are useable since 2015, according to section 13, subsection (b) of the Export and Import Law of the ministry. The ministry issues the notification every year as per its policy, intending to avoid unnecessary goods piled up and environmental damage, and improving the entrepreneurs' production capacity.

Those reconditioned machines are to be remained usable up to 10 years starting from the import date.

The machines shall be

repaired to have the usable condition. The import requires a 10-year warranty by foreign sellers. Moreover, the machine parts and accessories of those imported machines shall be easily purchased in the domestic market. The preshipment inspection certificate with six-month validity is also required to ensure the running condition of those machines, as per the notification.

Nevertheless, the permit does not cover home appliances such as refrigerator, air-conditioner, washing machines, copier, printers, televisions, computers and office machines. Those machines which are designated for commercial sales are also not included.

The notification comes into effect within 60 days of the issue date (20 January 2021). Those reconditioned machines can be imported only via maritime trade. — GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

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La Niña to bring above average rainfall to SE Asia until 2021: WMO

SOUTHEAST Asia will experience above-average rainfall until next year due to the effects of the La Niña phenomenon, according to the latest World Meteorological Organization report.

The WMO report said this year's La Niña "is expected to be moderate to strong", affecting temperatures, precipitation and storm patterns in many parts of the world.

The last time there was a strong event was in 2010-2011, followed by a moderate event in 2011-2012.

La Niña is often associated with wet conditions across large parts of South East Asia, Australia and the latest seasonal outlook is consistent with historical La Niña conditions.

La Niña is often associated with wet conditions across large parts of South East Asia, Australia and the latest seasonal outlook is consistent with historical La Niña conditions.

the U.S., Japan and Australia who monitor sea conditions.

So far, dry conditions have been reported in Brazil, Argentina, and parts of the U.S., and bouts of excessive rain in Australia and parts of Southeast Asia.

La Niña 2020 has evolved quicker and with stronger intensity than many leading climate models predicted and the phenomenon the "primary supply-side wild card" for agricultural markets going into 2021.

It is important to note that El Niño and La Niña are not the only factors that drive global and regional climate patterns. No two La Niña or El Niño events are the same, and their effects on regional climates can vary depending on the time of year and other factors. Therefore, decision makers should always monitor latest seasonal forecasts for the most up to date information.

GLOBAL CORONAVIRUS CASES DROP FOR THIRD STRAIGHT WEEK

Consecutive drop in new COVID-19 cases 'encouraging news': WHO

THE number of new COVID-19 cases globally has fallen for the third week in a row, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported on Monday, though urging countries not to let up efforts to defeat the disease.

"There are still many countries with increasing numbers of cases, but at the global level, this is encouraging news", said WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, speaking during the agency's bi-weekly briefing from Geneva.

"It shows this virus can be controlled, even with the new variants in circulation. And it shows that if we keep going with the same proven public health measures, we can prevent infections and save lives".

Stay the course

While welcoming the development, Tedros recalled "we have been here before", and warned against complacency.

"Over the past year, there have been moments in almost all countries when cases declined, and governments opened up too quickly and individuals let down their guard, only for the virus to come roaring back", he said.

The WHO chief stressed that

as vaccines are rolled out, people everywhere must continue to take measures aimed at keeping themselves, and others, safe.

"It is vital that governments enable people to make the right choices, whether it is making quarantine easier to adhere to, or making workplaces safer," he said.

"Controlling the spread of the virus saves lives now, and saves lives later by reducing the chances of more variants emerging. And it helps to ensure vaccines remain effective."

Lack of data undermines response

WHO has underscored the urgent need for better data to strengthen pandemic response and improve health outcomes, in a new report launched on Monday.

The SCORE Global Report provides a snapshot of the state of health information systems around the world and is the first study of its kind.

SCORE stands for Survey, Count, Optimize, Review and Enable, and the report covers 133 country health information systems and just under 90 per cent of the global population.

It reveals that globally, four



Dr. Neeraj, a UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) Consultant, demonstrates hand sanitizing techniques and the benefits of social distancing at Mamta Diwas (VHND) at Chanota Fadia, AW Baria, Gujarat, India. PHOTO: UNICEF/PANJWANI

in 10 deaths remain unregistered, while only one in 10 deaths is recorded in the African region.

WHO said the lack of data worldwide limits understanding of the true mortality impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which undermines response planning.

Scoring a goal against COVID-19

The global football governing body, FIFA, is supporting the drive to make COVID-19 vaccines, treatments and diagnostics available to

all countries.

FIFA has teamed up with WHO for the "ACT Together" campaign, which also promotes adherence to the everyday public health measures aimed at preventing coronavirus spread, such as hand washing and wearing masks.

Star footballers and competing team captains will participate in the campaign, which is being held in conjunction with the FIFA Club World Cup 2020, taking place in Qatar from 4-11 February.

FIFA President Gianni Infantino emphasized the importance of having a level playing field, whether in football or in health.

"Fairness and team spirit are key values of our sport," he said. "And these same key values, fairness and team spirit are needed for today's great challenge: overcoming COVID-19."

It is important for football to address issues that affect society, 2001 Ballon d'Or winner Michael Owen told the briefing, reminding

that vaccine access must be fair and equitable.

"This has been a global pandemic, and globally we need to give access to vaccination," he said.

Update on Wuhan mission
Meanwhile, WHO Technical Lead on COVID-19, Dr Maria Van Kerkhove, said the international mission on the ground in Wuhan, China, is having "very productive discussions" with counterparts there.

The 15 experts arrived in the city last month to study the origins of the novel coronavirus, which causes the disease.

Dr Van Kerkhove reported that they have visited hospitals, as well as the market, and have met with officials from the Wuhan Centre for Disease Control (CDC) and the Chinese CDC.

"Their focus is on the early cases and they are having very good discussions around that," she said.

The mission has attracted media attention and Dr Van Kerkhove underscored that the team must be given the space to carry out its work.

SOURCE: UN News

A UNITED APPROACH TO FIGHTING COVID-19

Time to team up and tackle Long Covid, says WHO expert

IT is time to start solving the mystery of Long Covid, an aspect of the pandemic blighting millions of lives, the World Health Organization's leader on post-Covid conditions told AFP.

Little is known about why some people, after coming through the acute phase of Covid-19, struggle to recover and suffer ongoing symptoms including tiredness, brain fog, cardiac and neurological disorders.

At this stage of the pandemic, the world is fixated on vaccine roll-out and new, more contagious variants of the coronavirus.

However, Long Covid deserves similar urgent attention, said Janet Diaz, the clinical care lead in the WHO's emergencies programme, ahead of a push for a globally-unified approach to the problem.

"We still don't fully understand what Long Covid is," Diaz told AFP in an interview outside the WHO's



Members of the World Health Organization (WHO) team investigating the origins of the Covid-19 pandemic arrive to visit a museum exhibition about China's fight against Covid-19 in Wuhan, China's central Hubei province on January 30, 2021. PHOTO: AFP

headquarters in Geneva.

"There's quite a bit to learn, but I am confident that the scientific community is really rallying around."

Tellingly, Long Covid does not yet have a proper name.

The WHO currently calls it post-Covid condition, while other terms in circulation include post-

acute Covid syndrome and Covid long haulers.

Building up a picture

The WHO is hosting a first global seminar on Long Covid on

February 9. It will bring scientists, experts and clinicians together to define the condition, give it a formal name and harmonise study methods.

"It's a condition that needs further description, further understanding of how many are affected and further understanding of what is causing it, so we can better prevent, manage and treat it," said Diaz, 48, a US respiratory physician and intensive care doctor.

She said British and other studies suggested potentially one in 10 cases may have prolonged symptoms one month after infection, but there was no picture yet of how long those conditions might persist.

The elderly and those with underlying conditions are most at risk of serious disease from Covid-19.

But the profile of Long Covid patients does not match. It affects people with varying degrees of severity of disease and "seems to

potentially also include younger people", including children, said Diaz.

While the pandemic response priority remains preventing people from catching the virus and falling ill, treating coronavirus cases "must also now include care after the acute illness... until you get back to full health", Diaz said.

Cracking the code

Diaz said fatigue seemed to be the most common symptom, with others including post-exertional malaise, cognitive dysfunction or brain fog, shortness of breath, heart palpitations and neurological problems.

"How these are all related - that's what we don't understand. Why would one person get this, and the other person get that?" asked Diaz, saying researchers needed to crack the underlying mechanisms of the disease that were causing these persistent symptoms.

SOURCE: AFP

Union Day Objectives 74th Anniversary of Union Day - 2021

1. To work on the Union Peace Conference - 21st Century Panglong, till the success of the internal peace process is achieved.
2. Development of the socio-economic life of the ethnic nationals.
3. To work for the emergence of a constitution that is in alignment and harmony with the Democratic Federal Union.
4. All ethnic nationals to work for the preservation and protection of non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national unity, and perpetuation of national sovereignty.
5. To nurture and develop new generations endowed with high skills and capabilities imbued with strong Union spirit.

Union Day slogans for 2021 (74th Anniversary)

1. Equal opportunities and equal responsibilities, living in a peaceful, prosperous and stable Union.
2. Unity is strength, solidarity is power
That is the heart of the Union.
3. Many fruits sprouting from one stem,
this is our brotherhood of the Union.
4. Our Union built with brotherhood,
Never forget Union day.
5. Drinking the same water, living on the same land,
we are Union nationals of the same blood.



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Tuesday 2 February, 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is cloudy over the Southwest Bay and a few cloud to partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 3 February, 2021: Weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Generally fair in the whole country.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3 February, 2021: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3 February, 2021: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3 February, 2021: Generally fair weather

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
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Printed and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.
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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

All YBS buses running in Yangon

ALL YBS buses are running as usual in Yangon on 2 February, said Joint Secretary U Hla Aung of the Yangon Region Transport Authority (YRTA).
“Now, our YBS buses are running as usual because there are many commuters who depend upon the public transportation,” he explained.
The YBS buses from all buses lines and other city taxis and private vehicles are running on the road in Yangon Region. However, the roads are not busy like before the outbreak of a pandemic. Only companies’ staff are going on the road.
“The number of running YBS buses dropped significantly in the pandemic period. So far, over 3,000 buses are resuming their operations as usual, which is more than three-fourths of all YBS city buses. And, YBS buses are carrying out around 450,000 or 500,000 commuters.
“Usually, the YBS carries 1.8 million passengers a day. Most people are travelling with YBS buses, particularly in the



YBS buses are running as usual in Yangon on 2 February. PHOTO: MYINT MAUNG KYAW

morning and evening. Only a few passengers are on board the YBS buses in the afternoon,” said Dr Maung Aung, the secretary of YRTA.
More than 4,000 buses from nearly 100 bus lines provide daily service for the passengers in the Yangon Region. Now, YBS operates over 3,000 buses. —Myint Maung Kyaw
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Trial cultivation of grapes succeeds in Kyaukse

GRAPES cultivation succeeded in Hmine Pan village, Kyaukse Township, Mandalay Region. The residents grew about 500 trees of grapes on a trial basis in the village.
The grapes are high yielding and selling at an affordable price. Thus, the local growers are happy with a handsome profit.
Before growing grapes, the cultivated ground needs to be repaired. The ground needs to be dug one-foot deep and one-foot wide hole and added with natural compost. After fixing the ground, the grape trees could be grown. After six months, we need to plant under the grafting system. Then, the fruits could be picked after another six months. The cultivation of 500 grape trees costs K1.6 million, and it could produce 1,500 visses of grape. The grapes are likely to fetch around K3,000 to K4,000 per viss in the market. All 500



Grapes cultivations are successful in Hmine Pan village, Kyaukse township. PHOTO: THET MAUNG (KYAUKSE)

grapes plantations could earn K6 million, said U Nyunt Win, a grape grower.
The grape plantation is suited to Kyaukse weather and soil. That is the reason why the grapes should be grown more than other fruits in Kyaukse. It can also earn a handsome profit for the local growers. Thus, the local farmers who own the land expand the grape cultivation. —Thet Maung (Kyaukse)
(Translated by Hay Mar)

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SUB-ORBITAL TESTING

Iran launches new satellite-carrying rocket

IRAN'S defence ministry on Monday said it has test launched a new satellite carrier with its "most powerful" solid-fuel engine to date, state TV reported.

The test was "the first launch of the Zoljanah hybrid satellite carrier for sub-orbital testing", said Ahmad Hosseini, the spokesman for the ministry's space division.

"This three-stage carrier can compete with the world's current carriers, and has two stages of solid propulsion and a single liquid one," he added, noting that the rocket was for "research purposes".

According to Hosseini, Zoljanah can put satellites in a "500 kilometre (310 mile) altitude orbit and carry a 220-kilogramme (1,100-pound)" payload.

He also said the rocket can be launched from a "mobile platform", which provides it with "special capabilities".



A handout picture provided by Iran's Defence Ministry shows the launch of Iran's newest satellite-carrying rocket, called "Zuljanah," at an undisclosed location on February 1, 2021. **PHOTO: IRANIAN DEFENCE**

Footage released by the broadcaster showed the rocket being launched in a desert area,

without specifying the place and time of the test. According to Mehr news

agency, the launch took place at the central Semnan province, where Iran has a space centre.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards launched the country's first military satellite, dubbed the Nour, into orbit in April last year, coming after the failed launch of another satellite two months before.

The Guards said the satellite orbited the Earth at 425 kilometres and was carried using the Qassed rocket, using a liquid and solid propulsion similar to Zoljanah.

The Islamic republic's arch enemy the United States at the time said the launch proved that Iran's space programme was for military rather than commercial purposes.

Iran maintains it has no intention of acquiring nuclear weapons and says its aerospace activities are peaceful and comply with a United Nations Security Council resolution.

SOURCE: AFP

CONTROVERSIAL NEW MECHANISM

Japan says EU export curbs delaying its Covid-19 vaccination plan

EU export rules are preventing Japan from finalizing its coronavirus vaccination plan, a Tokyo minister said Tuesday, after the bloc introduced a controversial new mechanism for the shipment of jabs made inside its borders.

With less than six months until the pandemic-postponed Tokyo Olympics, Japan has yet to set out when it will vaccinate its population of 126 million people, although it hopes to give the first doses later in February.

The European Union, which is facing criticism of its own sluggish Covid-19 vaccine rollout, on

Friday brought in a new rule requiring drug-makers to seek approval before exporting vaccines to non-EU countries.

"Because of that, we have not been able to finalize our supply schedule," said Taro Kono, the minister in charge of Japan's vaccine programme.

Japan has reached deals with Pfizer, Moderna and AstraZeneca to buy enough vaccine doses for its population.

But health authorities want to confirm the vaccines' safety through domestic clinical trials before giving any of them a green

light. The jab from Pfizer — which, along with AstraZeneca has factories in the EU — will likely be the first approved.

Kono, the outspoken minister for regulatory reform, also called for international measures to prevent so-called "vaccine nationalism" impacting on global health.

Delays have dogged both the procurement and rollout of vaccines in the EU, which has been embroiled in a furious dispute with AstraZeneca.

The bloc accuses AstraZeneca of breaching its contract by delaying deliveries to EU governments while maintaining those under a deal it signed earlier with the United Kingdom.

On Friday, the European Commission launched a scheme to monitor and in some cases bar exports of vaccines produced in EU plants—an emergency measure that has been criticized by the World Health Organization.

Kono said he understood the EU's predicament, but stressed that the export rules had come in after vaccines became available, and had "started to affect supplies".

SOURCE: AFP



Japan has reached deals with Pfizer, Moderna and AstraZeneca to buy enough vaccine doses for its whole population of 126 million. **PHOTO: AFP**

A MANCHESTER-BORN CONVERT TO ISLAM

Indonesia detains British woman on terror suspect list



Indonesian cleric Abu Bakar Bashir reportedly officiated at Tazneen Miriam Sailer's wedding. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

INDONESIA has detained a British woman named on a list of global terror suspects and plans to deport her for visa violations, authorities told AFP Tuesday.

Tazneen Miriam Sailer — a Manchester-born convert to Islam married to an Indonesian jihadist who was killed in Syria — is not charged with terror offences.

But she and her late husband are on an Indonesian police list of suspected extremists that includes several foreigners notorious in the West.

Sailer, 47, and her 10-year-old Indonesia-born son, were being held in Jakarta after being picked up last year without documents

allowing her to remain in the Southeast Asian nation, her lawyer Farid Ghazali said.

"She was put (in detention) while awaiting her return, which will be facilitated by the British embassy," Indonesian immigration directorate spokesman Ahmad Nursaleh told AFP.

The embassy declined to comment, and it was unclear when she might be deported.

The police docket does not specify why Sailer was named with some 400 other terror suspects — including her husband — on the Indonesian list.

He was killed in Syria in 2015.

The couple's 2010 marriage was officiated by radical Indonesian cleric Abu Bakar Bashir, the spiritual head of extremist group Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), according to sources familiar with the case.

JI members were behind the 2002 Bali bombings which killed more than 200 people — including nearly 90 Australian holidaymakers — at two packed bars on the Indonesian island.

SOURCE: AFP

PANDEMIC RAVAGES GLOBAL ENERGY DEMAND

BP plunges into \$20.3-bn annual loss on virus fallout

BP reported Tuesday a huge \$20.3-billion (16.8-billion-euro) net loss for last year, despite a slender fourth-quarter profit, as the coronavirus pandemic ravaged global energy demand.

The loss contrasted sharply with net profit of \$4.0 billion in 2019, the British energy major said, adding that the oil sector had been “hit hard” by the fall-out from the Covid-19 crisis.

The London-listed giant said the loss was driven by tumbling oil and gas prices, as well as by significant impairments and exploration write-offs during a tumultuous year for the energy industry.

However in the fourth quarter, net profit hit \$1.36 billion after the sale of BP’s petrochemical business to privately-owned rival Ineos for \$5.0 billion.

BP launched plans last year

to axe about 10,000 jobs or 15 per cent of its global workforce under a cost-cutting drive that ends in 2021, and embarked upon major asset disposals after coronavirus sparked huge asset writedowns.

‘Pain and sadness’

“2020 will forever be remembered for the pain and sadness caused by Covid-19. Lives were lost -- livelihoods destroyed,” Chief Executive Bernard Looney said in a statement.

“Our sector was hit hard as well. Road and air travel are down, as are oil demand, prices and margins. It was also a pivotal year for the company.

“We launched a net zero ambition, set a new strategy to become an integrated energy company and created an offshore wind business in the United States,” Looney said.



British energy giant BP racked up a huge loss for 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic as it makes the switch out of fossil fuels into renewable. **PHOTO: AFP**

“We began reinventing BP -- with nearly 10,000 people leaving the company. We strengthened

our finances -- taking out costs and closing major divestments.” **SOURCE: AFP**

SOCIAL MEDIA PROGNOSTICATIONS

Elon Musk, a new Wall Street oracle?



A recharging station for Tesla electric cars in Hawthorne, California. **PHOTO: AFP/PATRICK T. FALLON**

WITH social media prognostications about Bitcoin or GameStop, Elon Musk has ventured further away from his own businesses and become more like a Wall Street heavyweight who can move markets with just a few words.

In his latest foray, the Tesla and SpaceX founder appeared on Clubhouse -- a social network accessible only by invitation -- to interview the head of online broker Robinhood, in the hot seat for his management of the GameStop affair, a chain of video game stores whose share price recently rocketed and is shaking hedge funds.

After discussing his ambitions for the colonization of Mars, as well as cryptocurrencies and artificial intelligence, Musk spoke with Vlad Tenev for 14 minutes, offering him the opportunity to respond to his detractors.

Robinhood has been limiting transactions on GameStop shares for several days.

But the gaming company, in fragile financial health, is being propped up by an army of small traders in a crusade against giant Wall Street hedge funds betting on its demise.

SOURCE: AFP

ANTITRUST LAWSUITS

Google deals with trio of US lawsuits over ad prowess

EXECUTIVES at Google parent company Alphabet will report quarterly earnings on Tuesday, seeking to highlight the internet titan’s money-making success while mindful of regulators concerned about the firm’s clout.

Google, which has long dominated the lucrative online advertising market, is the target of a trio of antitrust lawsuits in the US accusing it of abusing its position.

Regulators are concerned that the Silicon Valley giant’s search engine, ad platform,

mapping service, Android mobile operating system and other offerings give it unfair advantages.

Google has thrived during the pandemic as people rely on the internet for work, school, shopping and socializing.

Worldwide, the firm is on track to take in \$116.7 billion in digital ad revenue this year, an increase of 18.4 per cent from 2020, according to a forecast by industry tracker eMarketer.

SOURCE: AFP



Google, which has dominated the lucrative online advertising market, is the target of a trio of antitrust lawsuits in the US accusing it of abusing its position. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

NEWS
IN BRIEF

STREAMING RIGHTS

Amazon makes offer for broadcast rights of troubled French Ligue 1

AMAZON is among the contenders to secure the domestic broadcast contract for France’s troubled Ligue 1 although neither they nor the other candidates met the asking price when the rights were put up for tender on Monday, the French league (LFP) said.

Online sports streaming platform DAZN and American media giant Discovery also made offers, but the two main, established broadcasters on the French scene -- Canal Plus and the Qatari group beIN Sports -- chose not to come forward. The LFP said in a statement that it had received offers from “three major international groups: Amazon, Discovery and DAZN” for the domestic broadcast rights to show games in Ligue 1 and Ligue 2.

“As the reservation price was not met, the consultation process was unsuccessful. The LFP will give itself 48 hours to define the next steps.”

SOURCE: AFP

“PRIVACY NUTRITION LABEL”

Facebook pop-ups to escalate feud with Apple

FACEBOOK on Monday said that pop-up messages on its iPhone and iPad apps will tout benefits of targeted ads ahead of a privacy move by Apple that could curb tracking.

The tech giants have been clashing over a changes coming in Apple’s iOS operating software, which will include a tracking transparency feature that Facebook claims could cripple its ability to serve up targeted ads and hurt many businesses.

A new Apple software feature referred to as a “privacy nutrition label” includes a displayed prompt telling people what tracking data is gathered by mobile apps and asking for permission to allow it.

“To help people make a more informed decision, we’re also showing a screen of our own, along with Apple’s,” Facebook said in an updated post on the matter.

SOURCE: AFP

VIRUS-STRICKEN ECONOMY

Italy's GDP shrank 8.9pct in 2020: stats agency



The lockdown has hit Italy's economy hard, with fewer people on the streets.
PHOTO: MIGUEL MEDINA/AFP

ITALY'S virus-stricken economy shrank by 8.9 per cent last year, national statistics office Istat said Tuesday.

The calendar-adjusted figure represents the big-

gest contraction in gross domestic product (GDP) since the end of World War II.

It is a first estimate, subject to revision, which is slightly more optimistic

than what had been forecast by the Bank of Italy and the International Monetary Fund.

Both had predicted a 9.2-per-cent annual fall in GDP.

The Italian government, for its part, had forecast a 9.0-per-cent drop.

But it is still one of the worst in Europe, compared with a fall of 5.0 per cent in Germany and 8.3 per cent in France.

Spain's economy did worse, with a drop of 11 per cent.

Istat said GDP shrank by 2.0 per cent in the fourth quarter, compared to the previous three months.

The economy was hit by a new round of restrictions introduced to combat the second wave of coronavirus later in the year, the agency noted.

Italy, the eurozone's third largest economy, has been one of the countries worst hit by the pandemic, with nearly 90,000 dead from Covid-19.

SOURCE: AFP

STIMULUS HOPES

Stocks rally again as optimism returns to Asia markets

EQUITY markets rose again Tuesday, extending the previous day's rally as investors got back in the saddle following last week's global rout, with sentiment buoyed by US stimulus hopes.

Concerns about the social media-led retail investor battle with Wall Street hedge funds also appeared to be easing, with analysts saying the threat to broader markets would likely be limited.

However, while the mood was a lot lighter than last week, the ever-present shadow of the coronavirus, along with stuttering vaccine roll-outs, continues to keep gains in check.

Joe Biden on Monday held a meeting with a group of Republican law-

makers to discuss their stimulus counter-proposal as the new president looks to push through a bipartisan deal.

The \$600 billion plan backed by Republicans is less than a third of the one put forward by the White House, and includes smaller handouts and no provision for state and local governments -- two issues that Democrats are likely to reject.

The talks ended with no agreement but Republican Senator Susan Collins described them as "frank and very useful".

She added: "I wouldn't say that we came together on a package tonight. No one expected that in a two-hour meeting."

SOURCE: AFP

ALTERNATIVE MEASURES

Republican Covid relief plan excludes Biden priorities

US President Joe Biden met Monday with a group of Republican senators who are pushing an alternative to his massive Covid-19 relief plan, but no agreement was reached.

Biden, who campaigned on restoring bipartisanship in Washington, wants to spend \$1.9 trillion to revitalize the world's largest economy after the pandemic caused waves of layoffs, but Republicans in Congress have said they won't support such a large package.

On Sunday, a group of 10 Republicans detailed a measure costing \$600 billion, and Biden responded with an invitation to the White House to discuss the idea. But no agreement was at hand following the meeting, which Republican Senator Susan Collins described as "frank and very useful", if not conclusive.

SOURCE: AFP

EMBEZZLEMENT CHARGES

Moscow court starts trial in case of US, French investors

A prominent US investor and French banker went on trial in Moscow on Tuesday nearly two years after they were arrested on embezzlement charges that rattled Russia's business community.

Michael Calvey, the 53-year-old founder of the Russia-based investment fund Baring Vostok, was arrested along with French banker Philippe

Delpal and several associates in February 2019 and accused of defrauding Vostochny Bank of 2.5 billion rubles (\$32.9 million).

Calvey and Delpal, who both wore medical masks and dark blazers over light-coloured shirts, denied the charges in court on Tuesday, an AFP journalist reported.

"The allegation against me is not only

unreasonable and unfair, but also illegal," Calvey told the judge, speaking in Russian.

Delpal also denied his guilt, saying the case is a "continuation of unfounded speculation and fabrications".

The next hearing has been scheduled for February 17.

SOURCE: AFP



Equity markets rose again on Tuesday, extending the previous day's rally as investors got back in the saddle following last week's global rout, with sentiment buoyed by US stimulus hopes. PHOTO: AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V YANTRA BHUM VOY. NO. (735W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V YANTRA BHUM VOY. NO. (735W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **3-2-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDIES FOR SIN KA WINDFARM PROJECT IN MAGWAY REGION

InfraCo Myanmar Wind Power Co. Ltd (IMWP) proposes to develop the Sin Ka Windfarm Project with a capacity of up to 105 MW in Chauk Township, Magway Region, Myanmar.

Under the Environmental Conservation Law and Rules of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, IMWP is required to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Study in order to obtain an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) for the Project. Environmental Resources Management - Hong Kong Limited (ERM), and Environment Quality Management (EQM), on behalf of IMWP, conducted the EIA Study, which includes baseline surveys and stakeholder engagement. The EIA study was conducted in accordance with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MONREC)'s EIA Procedure (2015).

The EIA Report for the Project has been submitted to the Environmental Conservation Department (ECD) of the MONREC.

More information about IMWP (as a wholly owned subsidiary of InfraCo Asia Development Pte. Ltd) and the Projects can be found at IAD's website <https://infracoasia.com/>.



Apple Store with Apple Mark. PHOTO SUPPLIED

Measures to help implement 2019 Trademark Law

By Dr Moe Moe Thwe

TRANSLATED BY HTUT HTUT (TWANTAY)

(CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK)

Authorization for marks

As stated by IP law, an application for mark registration has to be scrutinized in accord with the provisions stipulated in article 13. It is aimed at scrutinizing the characteristics eligible for mark registration. A mark must have distinctness in the process of scrutinizing the qualities eligible for mark authorization. Distinctness means there must have the difference between the mark and the goods or the service. Moreover, the mark to be used must give clear information

or easy recognition to the users. If not so, the mark will not be eligible for registration.

For example, if an apple selling shop uses 'apple shop' or 'picture of an apple' as a mark, it will be supposed that it is not distinct. This is because 'apple shop' is a common name. The person officially using the mark must have the right to ownership as long as he/she uses it. No one is allowed to own a common mark. But if the picture of the apple is used for other goods, it will be distinct. For instance, the picture of apple can be used for computer, phone and other electronic devices. But if it is used for computer, the mark

should not be 'computer picture'.

Lack of distinctness includes simplicity, complexity, incomprehensible marks, an alphabet or one digit, simple phrases, just surface design, and common usable marks. A mark is typically not distinct, but if it is recognized by the users as the trademark, or if it is able to effectively direct original trade, it can't be denied. Moreover, if a mark is continuously used as a trademark, the users will recognize it as the trademark and then it should be regarded as the distinct mark.

If a mark contains quality, quantity, intended use, value, time of manufacture and other characteristics or only instructions, it can be denied. This is because these marks are just an illustration.

For example, a mark for a candy selling service should not

be the words "Pleasant Smell" or "Sweet". The reason is that the candy possesses the property of being sweet and being a pleasant smell. Although candy has many different kinds, every candy has the property of being sweet, and so it can be denied to allow registration. Moreover, a mark for a product or a service should not be the words such as No-1 or the Best. These words are not allowed using as single ownership. In addition, the usages in the mark should not mislead the public or commercial area. For example, although the word 'swiss' is revealed in the trademark of 'swisstime' as a place of origin, if it is not related to this place, it will be able to mislead the users about the place of origin as Switzerland.

Attention is to be paid that a mark to be used for a product or a

service mustn't be detrimental to public order, reputation, beliefs, the Union's reputation, or traditions valued by ethnic minorities. Besides, without the approval of relevant authorities, all or part of a country's flag, ceremonial appearance, other marks and symbols, a legal mark indicating the management or guarantee by a State, or a mark of quality guarantee, or a multilateral international organization's ceremonial appearance, flags, or other marks, names, including said organization's acronyms, full name, or any part mustn't be directly copied or imitated or misled. If a mark uses any of the said points, it will be ineligible for registration. Furthermore, the marks and signs separately protected under the international agreements in which the Republic of the Union of Myanmar is a

Party are unauthorized for use as the mark.

If a mark becomes a common usage in contemporary expressions or a part of traditions or a practical usage in the commercial area, it will be ineligible for registration. It is important for the owners of the trademarks to realize the explanations mentioned above because supervising matters related to the application for registration and examination of marks are to be carried out.

Announcement of mark and objection

Eligible marks will be publicized through the website of Department of Intellectual Property after they have been scrutinized in line with article 13 of application for marks.

Anyone has the right to object to the release of the announcement for mark application within 60 days from the date on which the announcement is released. If there is no objection to the mark application, eligible marks will be publicized through the website. With regard to the marks that have seen objections, necessary investigations will go on.

The absolute grounds prescribed in article 13 and the relative grounds in article 14 must come under close scrutiny.

The mark application must not infringe upon the intellectual property rights of any other person. The scrutiny also focuses on a connection to other goods or services and an unfair market competition for any other person. The nature of goods or services, useful ways, aims, distributing market, and connections between the consumers and the public must be taken into consideration when the mark is decided for eligible registration.

The mark misleads consumers through its use by being identical or similar to any other person's registered mark or mark for which registration or right of priority has been applied for beforehand for identical or similar goods and services for said marks. If so, it can be refused for registration.

It uses without the consent of a relevant person or legally formed organization, a mark which may be harmful to the individual rights of any person or the name and reputation of a legally formed organization. If so, it can be refused for registration.

A mark registration application is made for a mark that misleads consumers by not only being identical or similar to a

well-known mark but is also used in identical or similar goods or services. If so, it can be refused for registration.

A mark registration application is made for a mark that is identical or similar to a registered well-known mark, but the goods or services are not identical or similar but may indicate that there is a connection between the owner of the well-known mark and the goods or services that the mark in question is being used for and such use may be harmful to the interests of the owner of the well-known mark. If so, it can be refused for registration.

Term of mark registration and rights

Trademark examiners of the Department of Intellectual Property have to conduct an inspection of the mark registration in accord with rules and regulations prescribed in Chapter 8 of Application and Chapter 9 of Examination, Objection and Registration. The marks appropriate for stipulations are considered eligible for registration. The registrar will issue a certificate of mark registration to the applicant. The marks eligible for registration will be announced via the website of the Department of Intellectual Property.

The intellectual property right of a mark is recognized from the submission date of the registration application. A registered mark can be used for the goods or the services. It is required for the applicant to renew the term of mark registration once for every ten years. The marks failing to renew the term of registration do not continue enjoying intellectual property rights. If the owner of a mark complies with the provisions in Chapter XI, he shall enjoy the registered mark-related rights stipulated in this chapter for the term of the registration. For that reason, it is necessary to renew the registration term within the prescribed period in order to continue enjoying intellectual property rights for the goods or services whose marks are registered. If the registered marks fail to use from the date on which they have received an official registration to the next three years, they will continue enjoying intellectual property rights.

The mark misleads consumers through its use by being identical or similar to any other person's registered mark or mark for which registration or right of priority has been applied for beforehand for identical or

similar goods and services for said marks.

If any other person uses a registered mark without the consent of a relevant person or legally formed organization, or a mark is harmful to the individual rights of any person or the name and reputation of a legally formed organization, he or she can be sued under civil law or criminal law or both.

In respect of the right of priority, the owners of famous registered marks will have the right to prohibit the use of their identical or similar registered marks for identical or similar goods or services if they are used without their consent. The said goods or services can be regarded as a connection with the owner of the well-known mark. Such use may be harmful to the interests of the owner of a well-known mark.

The owner of a registered mark has the right to transfer the ownership of the mark to any person. An owner of a registered mark may grant a licence for the use of the mark to any person or legally formed organization after setting the terms and conditions. If the goods already distributed in the market see changes and damages, the right of going on selling them can be prohibited in accord with the existing law.

An owner of a registered mark or the licensee may submit certified copies of the grant of the licence and pay the prescribed fee to the registrar to request the entry of the grant of license into the registration records.

The registrar shall enter the grant of license to the registration records according to

section 46 and make a public announcement in a manner that is consistent with stipulations.

With regard to owner's name or address; indications of type, related information, quality, quantity, intended use, value; origin, manufacturing period or other characteristics of the goods or services; descriptions of the intended use of goods or services, particularly descriptions of the intended use of accessories or spare parts, if another person uses a registered mark by an owner in good faith for industrial or commercial business, an owner of a registered mark is not entitled to prevent another person's use. Moreover, the owner of a registered mark is not entitled to prohibit the use of his mark for goods delivered to a market by himself or another person who has his consent.

Acceptance of mark application in advance

After the Trademark Law comes into effect, the Department of Intellectual Property will simultaneously accept old and new marks being used in the market of the country on the date when applications begin acceptance. On the first date, a large number of mark applications will be received because of the first-to-file system. The applications for old marks may be many more than those for new marks. When the mark applications are accepted within a day, the registration unit under the Department of Intellectual Property may encounter insufficient strength of staff and time. Moreover, there may be frequent sever breakdowns

as many applicants use online applications at the same time within a day. Advance acceptance for old marks before the law comes into effect will mitigate the difficulties which can be come across. Mark applications can be submitted with the use of IT system of WIPO File. The WIPO File is available via www.ipd.gov.mm of Intellectual Property Department. Applications must be submitted online.

So as to use WIPO File, it needs registration of WIPO File user. After being registered, the user's name and password have to be created. With the use of the user's name and password, the registered user can enter WIPO File through the website of the IP Department regardless of wherever he is. This system is beneficial to mark registration services, legal agencies, companies and entrepreneurs owning many marks. On behalf of the owner of the registered mark, the mark registration services can submit a large number of mark applications, and they will be promising services in the future. If entrepreneurs want to apply for a mark registration in person, go to the mark registration unit of the IP Department. It can be done with the transfer of general power to any person. To ensure advance acceptance for old marks before the law comes into effect, the Ministry of Commerce responsible for the implementation of IP laws accepted online mark applications as of 1st October with the release of Notification No 63/2020 on 28 August in 2020. Raising awareness of online mark registration was conducted for 16 times through virtual format. Raising awareness of online mark registration was broadcast live via IP Myanmar Facebook and website of the IP Department. Mark applications will be examined in accord with the stipulations as prescribed only after the trademark law goes into effect. The Ministry of Commerce is making concerted efforts in ensuring IP laws to come into effect early 2021.

The IP Department of the Ministry of Commerce has urged the entrepreneurs from home and abroad to apply for mark registrations in accordance with the Trademark Law enacted on 30 January in 2019 in order to enjoy equal rights for intellectual property, to prevent against violation of intellectual property rights, to enter a fair market competition, to stand as high-quality products and services and to ensure market expansion.



Trademark of SwissTime. PHOTO SUPPLIED



Olympics will happen 'however coronavirus evolves,' Tokyo 2020 chief says

TOKYO — The pandemic-postponed Olympics will go ahead this summer "however the coronavirus evolves", Tokyo 2020 chief Yoshiro Mori said Tuesday, brushing aside doubts about the event.

Organizers, Japan's government and Olympic officials are trying to shore up support for the games despite a surge in infections around the world, less than six months before the opening ceremony.

Doubts about the games have grown as countries have been forced to re-enter lockdowns, with large parts of Japan currently under a virus state of emergency, but Mori sounded a confident note.

"We'll certainly go ahead however the coronavirus (pandemic) evolves," he told a meet-



Tokyo 2020 President Yoshiro Mori delivers a speech at a beginning of a meeting on preparations for the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics at the Liberal Democratic Party headquarters in Tokyo on Tuesday. **PHOTO: POOL/AFP**

ing of Olympic organizers and members of Japan's ruling party in Tokyo. "We must go beyond discussion about whether we will

hold it or not. It's about how we will do it. Let's think about a new kind of Olympics on this occasion," he added.

The comments came hours before Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga announced a month-long extension of the state of emergency — meaning the measure will run until March 7 in Tokyo and several other parts of the country.

Tighter border restrictions imposed after infections surged have already forced the postponement of some sporting fixtures including this year's first Olympic test event, an artistic swimming qualifier that was scheduled for March.

The nationwide Olympic torch relay is still due to begin on March 25.

On Wednesday, organizers are expected to outline further details of the extensive coronavirus countermeasures they have devised for the 2020 Games,

which were pushed back to 2021 last March as COVID-19 spread around the globe.

But Japanese public opinion appears opposed to holding the games this year, with 80% of people backing either further postponement or a cancellation in surveys.

Organizers have said neither of those options are on the table, and have received strong support from both the International Olympic Committee and athletes around the world.

Olympic Minister Seiko Hashimoto told the meeting she too was confident the games could go ahead. "Making the Tokyo Games a success will demonstrate the world is united," said Hashimoto, herself a former Olympian.—AFP ■

Djokovic says future of men's tennis in good hands

MELBOURNE — World number one Novak Djokovic said the future of men's tennis was in good hands Tuesday, praising the new generation for showing "courage and boldness" in their pursuit of Grand Slam glory.

Djokovic, Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer have dominated the sport over the past 15 years, holding a vice-like grip on the major titles, with 57 between them.

But their reign is being

threatened, with Dominic Thiem winning the US Open last year and the likes of Alexander Zverev and Stefanos Tsitsipas knocking on the door.

With the big three getting older, 17-time Grand Slam winner Djokovic said it was good to see the next generation performing well.

"It's great for the sport that we have new Grand Slam champions," he said after leading Serbia to a 2-1 win over Can-

ada in the ATP Cup.

"We have new successful young players that are showing the courage and boldness, coming into the biggest stadiums in sport, willing to take on the biggest challenge in facing especially the three of us, fighting for the biggest title.

"There are a few of them that are very close. They have huge potential. Obviously there's still a lot of time ahead of them."—AFP ■

Solskjaer tells Man Utd to 'make a fuss' about referees' decisions



Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer. **PHOTO: AFP**

LONDON — Ole Gunnar Solskjaer has told his Manchester United stars to "make a fuss" about referees' decisions after his team were on the wrong end of two key decisions in a damaging defeat against Sheffield United.

United are second in the Premier League heading into Tuesday's clash with Southampton after Saturday's goalless draw at Arsenal followed the shock 2-1 loss to the lowly Blades.

That result ended United's 13-match unbeaten league run, leaving Solskjaer frustrated by decisions that allowed Kean Bryan's opener and ruled out Anthony Martial's strike.

Billy Sharp pushed David De Gea as Bryan scored and

Harry Maguire was adjudged to have fouled goalkeeper Aaron Ramsdale before Martial found the net — decisions the United boss says he has had confirmation were wrong.

"I've got the delegate's report through from the ref and the two decisions were wrong," Solskjaer said.

"They've admitted that their goal should have been disallowed and ours should have stood and that is a big, big momentum changer for us."

The match delegate is a former player or manager who provides information into the overall reporting pot, which is different to the referee's assessor or Professional Game Match Officials Limited making that admission.—AFP ■

Liverpool's Minamino completes loan deal to Southampton

LONDON — Liverpool's Japanese midfielder Takumi Minamino has joined Premier League rivals Southampton on loan for the rest of the season, the south

coast club said on Monday (Feb 1).

The 26-year-old Japan international, who can play on the wing or as a second striker, was

signed by Liverpool from Austria's RB Salzburg a year ago.

"He will help provide another good attacking option, and is importantly the right profile of player for us," Southampton manager Ralph Hasenhuttl said in a club statement.

"This will give us some additional depth in our squad at an important time, and I am looking forward to beginning work with him on the training pitch."

Minamino, who has 12 goals in 26 appearances for his country, is the second Japanese international to arrive at Southampton after defender Maya Yoshida, who moved to Sampdoria this season.—AFP ■



Takumi Minamino can play on the wing or as a second striker. **PHOTO: AFP**